

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION

27 January 1953

MEMORANDUM TO: C/SR 2

FROM: C/DOB

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Memorandum on JANIS OZOLS

1. Transmitted herewith is a copy of a Memorandum for the Files on subject named person prepared by the AECOB case officer of this base. This memorandum is for your retention. The reason for the delay in reporting this matter is the obvious lack of time as well as the fact that we were desirous of receiving several letters from Ozols which would permit a better study of the complex, prior to submitting a complete report.

OK 2. The suggestions enumerated in paragraph 15 of the attached memorandum appear sound and well founded. Hence their acceptance is urged. This base, under existing regulations, is prepared to carry out suggestions (paragraph 15) a, d, and e. It is assumed Headquarters will implement the rest, if approved.

? 3. Attached to your copy for your disposition is Ozols' note which will serve to prove the bonafides of the bearer in the proposed meeting between URKIS and MELKIS and a member of CIA. This is described in paragraph 10 (f).

4. This base will continue contact with this agent, through ☐ ☐, or in person, should he appear in the U. S. on his own, and will report all developments.


Chief, SR/DOB

SR/DOB/MPH:sa

Attachment

Distribution

Addressee - Original & 1 ?
M. ☐ ☐ - 1
Chrono copies - 2

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2005

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

27 January 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Files

FROM: M. []

SUBJECT: Meeting with Janis Ozols for the purpose of debriefing

1. The undersigned met Ozols on 6 Jan 1953 at the Carlyle Hotel, room 502, Washington, D. C. for the purpose of debriefing him and clarifying all remarks made by Dr. []. The subject named person knows the undersigned as Mr. [] and believes that the Mr. [] with whom Dr. [] had talked in November 1951, and to whom [] is writing is a different individual.

2. Ozols related that he had come to Washington directly from Tennessee where he had conferred with []. In response to the question as to who else knew of his intended and imminent meeting with CIA he replied that in addition to [] the following persons knew that he was about to talk to this agency: ALBINS SIETINSONS, GUSTAVS CEIMINS, and HEINRICHS URKIS.

3. During the initial meeting the following outstanding points became evident:

a. At present there is a going correspondence between SIETINSONS in the U.S. and IIMARS RUPNERS in Latvia. This is conducted via a live mail drop in Germany. The address of the drop in Germany is available to Ozols. Since he feared detention by customs and immigration officials should Soviet mail be found on his person, Ozols left the letters from Rupners at home. It is reasonable to assume - and Ozols agreed - that the letters from Rupners must bear a true return address because SIETINSONS had been able to send replies to Rupners mail via the same mail drop in Germany. Ozols promised to inform us of the details of this drop as soon as he returns to Toronto.

b. Ozols has in his possession letters from Latvia of 1949 vintage which were written to him by a JANIS LINIS who, according to RUPNERS has died by being overrun by a street car. Ozols claims that the letters to him from LINIS as well as those to SIETINSONS from RUPNERS employ a certain phraseology known only to Ozols, which indicates to Ozols a great deal more than the overt text reveals. For example the word "drinking" indicates underground work; hence "we're still doing a good deal of drinking" would indicate that they are still engaged in conspiratorial and clandestine activities. (Ozols has furnished a list of such phrases and their meanings).

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

c. Going on the assumption that the letters may contain s/w Ozols has attempted to raise any s/w by holding the letters above the flame of a candle. This proved fruitless. Though Ozols seriously doubts that any s/w is in these letters, he has urged that we make an attempt to raise any s/w which may be present. Upon his return to Toronto Ozols will mail to us one letter and one postcard which he has received from LINIS. He has no other correspondence which is his property. All other letters which he has received are the property of SIETINSONS who is the only person who can give these letters to us.

d. In response to the request for clarification of [] phrase: "As I could not promise him any support from your side, he applied to the British authorities, which supplied him with the necessary documents . . . ", Ozols stated that that was an unfortunate misunderstanding which had occurred between him and []. According to Ozols he had received information from his source in England that Captain [] (of the []) had joined []. In Ozols attempts to double talk this, [] had misinterpreted this with the results as indicated above.

e. Ozols then mentioned the fact that a boat arrives in Swedish waters periodically and that his (Ozols) group has contact with the person or persons arriving. The last boat to arrive was in November 1951. However, Ozols claims he knows little of all details in these matters and is not able to give a full account of the actual operational side.

f. When requested to reveal the names and addresses of the members of his group he did so with a great deal of reluctance and needed repeated assurance that we handle such matters extremely securely. (Ozols went to the extent of showing the undersigned a clipping from a Toronto newspaper which stated that General Smith of CIA has admitted that there are communists even in CIA). Ozols revealed the following as being the only members of his group:

- (1) EDGARS BETMANIS
45 BROADHURST GARDENS
LONDON, N.W. 6 ENGLAND
- (2) HEINRICHS URKIS
(same address as above, c/o E. BETMANIS)
- (3) ZIGURDS MELKIS
GOTGATAN 77 III
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

According to Ozols, Jakobson, SIETINSONS, and CELMINS are not knowledgeable of these persons nor of any of the other operational details. Since Ozols indicated that he would desire that none of this be revealed to anyone else he was assured that we most certainly will comply.

g. Regarding the individuals mentioned in f (1), (2), and (3), Ozols stated that Betmanis is the least informed of the three and serves primarily as a letter drop for Urkis who is a seaman and oftentimes not at home. Urkis residence is correct as stated whenever he is in England. Melkis and Urkis both are the actual operational members and know all the details, the latter being the chief.

4. After careful consideration, it was decided that [] debrief Ozols since it was felt that Ozols would be a great deal more trusting toward a fellow countryman and also could express himself a great deal better in Latvian. The fact that Ozols could easily recognize [] was taken into consideration, but inasmuch as both [] and Ozols belong to the same college fraternity which has certain rituals and binds its members to secrecy, it was felt that Ozols would not reveal the fact that [] was working for the agency. Furthermore, initial assessment seemed to indicate that Ozols possess sufficient discretion and would hardly go about spreading the news that [] is employed by CIA. All in all it appeared that if properly handled, []'s contact with Ozols could only be beneficial.

5. In view of the above, [] was introduced to Ozols as Mr. [] Ozols was warned that should he recognize [], he is to continue referring to him by the above alias. It was also impressed upon Ozols that should he reveal [] to anyone, he would be harming his country and its chances for ridding it of communism; moreover he was warned that revealing [] as well as non-compliance with any instructions may cause us to discontinue any or all activities on behalf of his native land and its valiant resistance elements. The above seemed to have the desired effect to which Ozols added that we have nothing to fear from his side; if anything he is too cautious rather than talkative. Judging by the undersigned's limited observation and assessment of Ozols, it would not be far-fetched to state that Ozols is very secure and certainly not an individual who would talk for the sake of talking. On the other hand, he may - if sufficiently prevailed upon - feel a certain sense of loyalty toward his old cronies (Dr. JAKOBSONS et al) and reveal some portions of his connection with us. This would present little danger, if any. Nevertheless, the security of this entire affair has been continually emphasized by the case officer to the point that it has been overstressed, providing the necessary lag should Ozols talk to his old cronies. Should Ozols reveal [] connection with us to JAKOBSON, et al, this would to a certain extent prove beneficial and result in all members of the Jakobson complex communicating

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

with [] . In such case [] - under our guidance - could then play one member against the other and thereby derive all information in the possession of the group.

6. [] began debriefing Ozols on 7 January 1953. In the presence of Ozols, [] was instructed to have the report (of debriefing) ready, in translated form, on 13 January 1953, and Ozols was requested to be open and aboveboard. (The request to have his report ready in translated form was used only to mislead Ozols and give [] the necessary time for consultation with the case officer. In actuality []'s English is not sufficiently fluent for Latvian to English translation). The results of []'s debriefing will be filed separately.

7. Subsequent discussions with [] indicated the following:

a. Ozols had recognized [] shortly after the initial meeting and was very elated to know that [] was advising and aiding this agency.

b. As a result Ozols was extremely open and revealed all information that he possessed.

c. []'s debriefing was proceeding at a satisfactory pace and was conducted in an efficient manner.

d. [] felt that for the purpose of impressing Ozols as well as to insure ourselves regarding security and truthfulness, Ozols be given a carriage test and be requested to sign a secrecy agreement. (The case officer promised to think this over and give [] his answer).

e. [] felt that there must be some truth to Ozols narrative, particularly since Ozols mentioned [] whom [] knows well since they both served as enlisted men in the same unit of the Latvian Legion. All in all, [] was quite impressed by Ozols and felt that the complex warrants further exploration so as to determine whether or not any parts of this apparatus are salvagable at the present time without any political involvement (political involvement in this case would constitute an operational tie-up with Dr. Jakobson, et al; this entire click is the nucleus of the former PERKONKRUSTS (Swastika League) and is today considered by the Latvians as neo-fascist).

f. It is noteworthy that [] informed Ozols that his connection with this agency is a part time affair. He has actual employment as a free lance writer on engineering research and is fortunate that

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

his real job provides him the necessary leave-way to aid his country in this fashion. Nevertheless, [] informed Ozols that he often gets discouraged and feels he is wasting his time with such matters when he could be writing for profit. Ozols took this in the desired manner, and urged [] to rid himself of such thoughts and stay on as the best representative that his country could have.

8. Upon verbal presentation of paragraphs 1-7 above to the Branch Chief/SR 2, it was decided that a carriage test should be administered to Ozols. However, since Ozols is a resident of Canada and since clearance had never been procured, Staff C was consulted regarding the advisability of giving Ozols a carriage test. According to Staff C ([] and []), the determination as to whether or not carriage tests may be administered anywhere in the world lies with I & S. In view of this, a formal request was sent to I & S, which was followed by a conference between Messrs. [] and [] of I & S, [] of DOB, and Mr. [] of SR 2. In this conference it was decided that Ozols would be carried on the following day (prior to the carriage I & S requested a PRQ which was furnished; the case officer also had Ozols sign a secrecy agreement). The following morning I & S informed SR 2 that the carriage test was cancelled because of insufficient biographic information and the possibility that Ozols would become knowledgeable of our methods of operation and may reveal this publically.

9. Prior to the case officers final talk with Ozols, []'s debriefing report was reviewed and clarification requested in several places. [] also reported that, as instructed, he had asked Ozols whether or not he would be interested in undertaking a mission to his native country; Ozols replied in the negative. The possibility of utilizing Ozols as a spotter was discussed with [] who agreed that Ozols would be in a position to perform good service in such capacity because he has had a great deal of experience in clandestine work and its requirements since 1940. Regarding any prospects that Ozols may have at the present time, [] reported that a LEONS OZOLS (at present in Toronto) would in the subject's opinion be an excellent potential agent who has the necessary age, intelligence level, and patriotism.

10. During the final meeting with Ozols, at which [] was also present, the former was requested to do the following:

a. Upon return to Toronto he is to write [] a letter in which he would report the name and city of SIETINSONS' mail drop. In this letter he will enclose all correspondence he personally has received from Latvia (from LINIS); this does not include SIETINSONS' letters. This will be retained by us.

b. In a subsequent letter to [] he will state the street name and number (and apartment number) of SIETINSONS' mail drop.

c. He will write letters to CELMINS and JAKOBSONS informing them that he has made contact with this agency and he has sworn to reveal nothing else regarding this contact. Furthermore he will request that neither of the above mention his visit to Washington and/or anything else they know about the Ozols complex to anyone else. Failure on their part to comply with the above will result in immediate termination of our contact with Ozols should we decide to continue our contact with Ozols and explore his proposals. In case we wish to explore the Ozols complex any further, we will deal with Ozols only and with nobody else.

d. Ozols will write a letter to SIETINSONS in which he will state the same as (c) above and add that Sietinsons will be visited by an American official who would like to talk to him regarding the mail he (Sietinsons) receives from and sends to Latvia. Ozols will urge Sietinsons to be honest with this person and to furnish all he requests.

e. A copy of each letter Ozols will write to CELMINS, SIETINSONS, and JAKOBSONS will be forwarded to [] in a subsequent letter.

f. Ozols will write a letter to URKIS (in England) and inform him that the U.S. Government is very interested in talking to anyone arriving in Sweden from Latvia. It is preferable that such person be available for an extended period of time (approximately six weeks) during which time we are prepared to hold such person or persons in a secure area. Should such extended stay preclude the person from returning to Latvia until the following season (which may mean a six-month stay) we are prepared to accommodate this person. It would be preferable if we can have advance notice (7-10 days at least) of the arrival; however, if this is not possible we can arrange a meeting on very short notice. In addition (upon Ozols request) we are prepared to consider meeting URKIS and MELKIS jointly in STOCKHOLM. They are to notify us of the time, date, and place and we will inform them if this is acceptable and agreeable. For this purpose Ozols will mail them the copy of a message in his handwriting, the original of which will be presented by the U.S. representative at the meeting. The above will be written to URKIS who will notify MELKIS. A copy of Ozols letter to URKIS will be mailed to [] Ozols will caution both URKIS and MELKIS that they are not to write or relate this to anyone; noncompliance will result in complete cessation of negotiations which would be detrimental to their fellow countrymen in Latvia.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

g. Ozols will send to us personalia (as much as he can obtain without arousing suspicion) and the address of LEONS OZOLS (no relation). Regarding Leons Ozols, (the subject specified that he be the person to undertake the initial approach to Ozols). He was assured that we will not undertake anything regarding Leons Ozols without notifying subject. He has also promised to keep [] informed of any other prospective agents he may come across.

11. In the course of the undersigned's contact with Ozols a photograph of him was taken by the undersigned while Ozols was in his hotel room. The negative is attached to this report.

12. Prior to bidding Ozols farewell, the undersigned reimbursed him for his expenses incurred in connection with his journey to Washington, D. C. and his stay here. It later developed that the undersigned had made a \$5.00 error in the addition. Much to the undersigned's surprise, in the first letter to [] Ozols pointed out the error and enclosed the difference in cash. If nothing else, this gesture should certainly prove that Ozols is an honest person, at least as far as financial matters are concerned.

13. On 20 January 53 [] received the first letter from Ozols and on 21 January the second letter arrived. In both Ozols complied with the instructions to the letter. He informed that SIETINSONS' mail drop is the following:

(FICTITIOUS NAME OF RECIPIENT)
BEI FRAU DOSER
ALTENBURGSTRASSE 78
REUTLINGEN IN WURTEMBERG
US ZONE
GERMANY.

RI traces of any FRAU DOSER as well as variations in spelling proved negative.

14. Traces on Ozols in RI and the field proved negative. SIETINSONS, CELMINS and JAKOBSON are known to []; traces on all three proved negative in RI. There are no traces on MELKIS, BETMANIS, and URKIS in RI. [] was queried regarding the latter three and informed that URKIS is fairly incompetent and MELKIS is very naive. During []'s stay in Sweden a joke was played on MELKIS by some of []'s and MELKIS' mutual friends. Melkis was called on the phone and informed that the caller had just escaped from Latvia via Poland. This caused Melkis to become very excited to the point where he nearly lost control of himself. Melkis was often chided about this by his friends. Regarding BETMANIS [] feels that it is possible that he (Betmanis) may be employed by []. Betmanis was a member of the RIKARDS group from 1941-1943 in Latvia and gained valuable experience in clandestine work. URKIS worked for the same group and also gained a great deal of experience there.

15. Suggested Action:

a. SIETINSONS should be contacted and debriefed on his mail drop and other mail arrangements.

b. If an address to which Sietinsons can write in Latvia (to Rupners) can be procured and if it develops that the mail drop in Germany may be approached, CSOB should be requested to attempt to sway the mail drop so that we may intercept any mail to and from SIETINSONS. After perusal of such mail it will be returned to the drop for normal disposition. Furthermore, if the mail drop is susceptible, the possibility of utilizing it (without Sietinsons being informed) for [] or [] should be considered and explored. Either agent ([] or []) can then be briefed on Rupners who could not only provide s/w possibilities, but also may furnish a contact to the resistance elements.

c. [] station should be informed of all the foregoing and instructed to be prepared to undertake any necessary action. An information copy should go to the [] station. Traces on all concerned should be requested of [] and []. []'s traces should not include [] for the present.

d. The letters provided by Ozols and Sietinsons should be transmitted to TSS for striping for s/w and for their retention. (Evaluation of the overt text will be furnished separately).

e. Clearance on Ozols should be requested.

16. To summarize, Ozols appears to be a man of integrity, honesty, and a deep sense of patriotism. He gives every indication of being sincere, straight-forward, and fairly incapable of deception. On the other hand he does exaggerate somewhat and feels duty bound to his cronies. It is only his excellent sense of security which would override his feeling of being obliged to keep his cronies informed. The undersigned does not believe Ozols to be a fake. This is emphasized the fact that despite the belief that possibly Ozols would not furnish the address of the mail drop in Germany, the latter did comply with our request. Though much of the foregoing appears far-fetched and impossible, the undersigned believes that Ozols cannot be blamed for it. His deep patriotic feeling may lead Ozols to believe most anything he is told by his friends; this could prove to be the reason for any untruths and would only prove Ozols to be very naive and too trusting. However, Ozols has repeatedly stated that he is in no position to check any of the above and would appreciate it if we would ascertain the correctness of his information. Should his information prove untrue or misleading, he suggests we drop the entire matter.